

Revenue Estimate Methodology:

Data

Data from the state accounting system (SABHRS) and the Department of Revenue (DOR) are used to forecast cigarette tax revenues. The DOR provides information on the number of cigarette insignias (stamps) sold in each month and the amount of discounts given to cigarette distributors. Historic observations of tax collections are available through SABHRS.

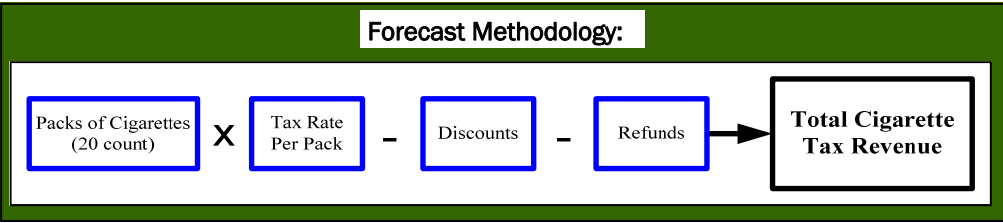
DOR provides detailed information on the sales of tax insignias by pack size, company, Tribal distribution, and month. To prepare the raw data for analysis, the total number of insignia sales is reduced by discounts and refunds given to the distributor. The resulting amount serves as a proxy for the number of taxable cigarette packs consumed in Montana in a year. The actual SABHRS data serves as a check against the number of proxy packs of cigarettes calculated by this method.

Analysis

In 1982, the consumption of cigarettes began to decrease as a result of an increased awareness of the health risks associated with smoking. Between 1982 and 2002, cigarette consumption decreased at a rate of almost 2 percent annually. Each of the two recent tax increases caused consumption to decrease at a greater rate for two years. These decreases forced downward shifts in Montana's consumption curve.

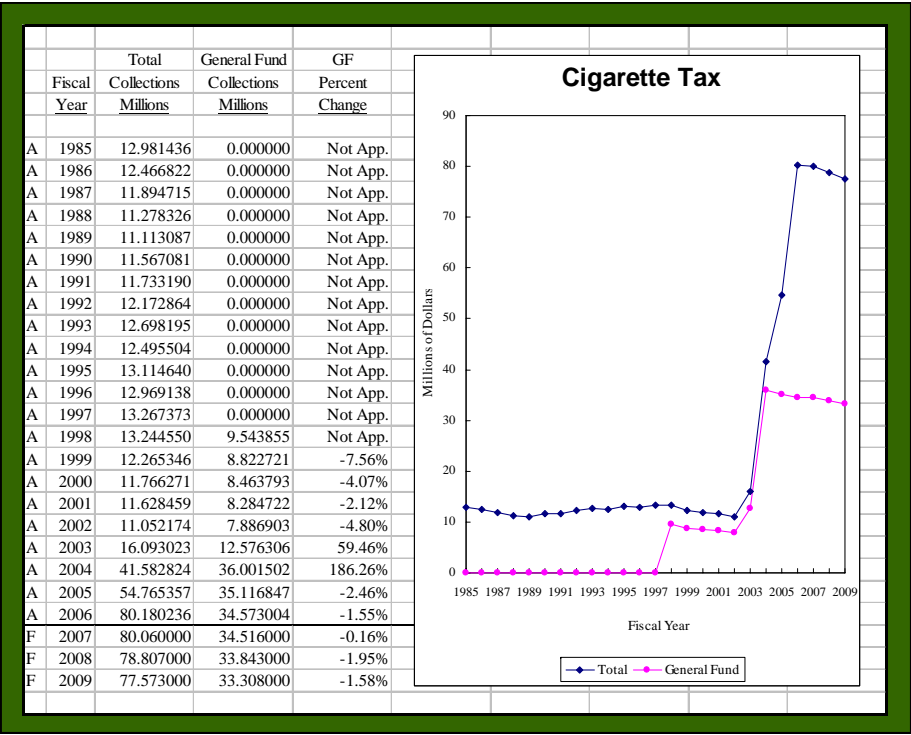
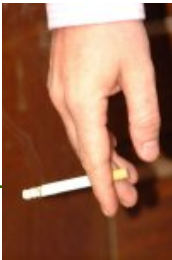
Experts in the field of cigarette consumption find that following the initial consumption response to the price adjustment of a tax increase, the consumption decline should return to the normal pattern. The forecast of packs decline by approximately two percent per year, following the reduction experienced in fiscal 2006.

Analysis shows that following the impacts from the price increases that were driven by the two tax increases, cigarette consumption declined at the slower rate of 1.6 percent. Consequently, the estimate of taxable cigarette pack sales for the forecast period is calculated by applying the decline of 1.6 percent to the base year proxy for taxable packs. Finally, the current tax rate is applied to the proxy for taxable packs.



Adjustment and Distribution

After estimating the gross cigarette tax collections, the estimates are reduced by the discounts and credits passed on to distributors. The last step in producing the estimate for the cigarette tax is to calculate the tax distributions. First, cigarette tax revenue is reduced by tribal distributions. At this time, five of the seven tribal governments receive cigarette tax dollars, Blackfeet, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Chippewa Cree, and Crow. These tribal governments adhere to Montana cigarette tax laws. The state of Montana collects the tribes' portion of the tax and quarterly distributes the collections based on a formula (per capita cigarette consumption times tribal membership times the Montana tax rate). Finally, the remaining tax revenues are distributed proportionally to the programs funded with cigarette tax revenues and to the general fund.



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Taxes in Brief...



Revenue Description:

The cigarette tax is an excise tax imposed on all cigarettes sold or possessed in Montana. The tax is imposed on the retail consumer, but is collected by wholesalers or retailers through the use of tax insignia. The insignias are purchased from the state and affixed to each package of cigarettes.



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Revenue Description: (continued)

The tax does not apply to quota cigarettes sold on an Indian reservation. In practice, the tax is levied on all cigarettes and the wholesaler receives a refund for the amount within the quota that has been sold within the boundaries of an Indian reservation. Each tribe's quota is equal to 150.0 percent of Montana's per capita general fund cigarette tax revenue multiplied by the enrolled tribal member population, or any other amount agreed to in a state-tribal agreement. The state has agreements with five tribes in Montana.

Beginning May 1, 2003, the Fifty-eighth Legislature passed SB 407 increasing the tax on cigarettes to \$0.70 per 20-cigarette package, a 289 percent increase from the previous \$0.18 tax. Shortly thereafter, the electorate approved I-149 that raised the tax on packs of 20 cigarettes by \$1.00 to \$1.70, beginning January 1, 2005, an increase of 143 percent. Both SB 407 and I-149 changed the distributor percentage discounts, but the amounts that distributors are allowed to retain for administration of the tax stayed relatively constant. SB 407 changed the distribution of the tax revenues to increase the amount deposited into the state general fund. I-149 increased tax revenues for veterans' nursing home operation and maintenance and provided revenue to a new state special revenue fund for health and Medicaid initiatives.

Statutory Reference:

- Tax Rate (MCA) – 16-11-111
- Tax Distribution (MCA) – 16-11-119
- Date Due – within 30 days after purchase of the insignia (16-11-117)



Applicable Tax Rate(s):

- Beginning January 2005, the excise tax on cigarettes is \$1.70 per package of 20 cigarettes, prorated for packages that differ from 20 cigarettes.
- Wholesalers pay a license fee of \$50.00 and each retailer pays a license fee of \$5.00. License fees are renewable each year and are non-transferable. Revenue from these fees is shown in "All Other General Fund Revenue".

Distribution:

All wholesaler and retailer license fees are deposited in the general fund. After deductions for tribal refunds, the cigarette tax revenue is distributed:

- The greater of 8.3% or \$2.0 million to DPHHS for veterans' nursing home operation and maintenance
- 2.6% to the long-range building program
- 44.0% for health and Medicaid initiatives
- The remainder (45.1%) to the general fund



Distribution Methodology:

